

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 LONDON 01320 01 OF 02 291953Z

67

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 INT-08 SAJ-01

OMB-01 FEA-02 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /148 W

----- 124083

P R 291910Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7522

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 01320

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, UK, PINT

SUBJECT: TENSIONS RISE AS MINE STRIKE IS ANTICIPATED

REF: LONDON 1116

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE GOVERNMENT AND THE NUM ARE ACTING
AS THOUGH THEY ANTICIPATE A COALFIELD VOTE AUTHORIZING
THE NUM EXECUTIVE TO TAKE STRIKE ACTION (REFTEL), AND
TENSION IS RISING SHARPLY ON BOTH SIDES. PRIME MINISTER
HEATH CHARGED THAT THE NUM VICE PRESIDENT MICHAEL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LONDON 01320 01 OF 02 291953Z

MCGAHEY -- THE COMMUNIST MILITANT -- AND OTHER NUM
LEADERS WERE USING THE DISPUTE FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES

-- TO SMASH STAGE THREE AND TO BRING A LEFT-WING GOVERNMENT TO POWER. AT THE SAME TIME NUM REGIONAL GROUPS IN SCOTLAND AND THE MIDLANDS ARE SEEKING SUPPORT FROM OTHER UNIONS TO PREVENT COAL MOVEMENT IN THE EVENT OF A STRIKE, AND SOME NUM LEADERS ARE ATTEMPTING TO PERSUADE SAFETY SPECIALISTS (IN ANOTHER UNION) TO LIMIT THEIR WORK DURING A STRIKE. LABOR PARTY LEADERS HAVE TOTALLY REPUDIATED THE MCGAHEY STATEMENTS WHICH STIMULATED THE HEATH STATEMENT. IN THE MEANWHILE, THE RAILWAY DISPUTE CONTINUES, WITH THE LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN (ASLEF) PLANNING A SERIES OF PERIODIC, REGIONAL STRIKES (TO BE REPORTED SEPARATELY), IN ORDER TO ESCALATE THEIR ACTION. END SUMMARY

2. IN A TELEVISION INTERVIEW LAST NIGHT (JANUARY 28), PRIME MINISTER HEATH SAID THAT MCGAHEY WAS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED. HEATH WAS REFERRING TO AN APPEAL (AND OTHER STATEMENTS) BY THE COMMUNIST TRADE UNION LEADER. MCGAHEY REPORTEDLY SAID THAT HE WOULD URGE TROOPS WHO MIGHT BE CALLED TO MOVE COAL TO HELP THE MINERS. HE SAID OF SUCH TROOPS: "MANY OF THEM ARE MINERS' SONS - SONS OF THE WORKING CLASS ... IF NECESSARY I WILL APPEAL FOR THEM TO ASSIST AND AID THE MINERS." HEATH SAID THAT MCGAHEY AND ANOTHER MINERS' LEADER HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEIR AIM WAS NOT WAGE NEGOTIATION OR A SETTLEMENT, BUT RATHER TO SMASH STAGE THREE, "GET RID OF THE ELECTED GOVERNMENT OF THE DAY" AND TO GET A LEFT-WING GOVERNMENT INTO POWER MORE TO THEIR LIKING.

3. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, HEATH REVIEWED THE GOVERNMENT'S OFFER, POSSIBLY INCLUDING A FURTHER WAGE REVIEW AFTER ANY SETTLEMENT, AND TERMED IT THE "BEST OFFER THEY HAVE EVER RECEIVED." HE SAID HE WAS VERY DISAPPOINTED THAT THE MINERS' EXECUTIVE SIMPLY ASKED FOR STRIKE AUTHORITY WITHOUT ALLOWING THE MINERS TO VOTE ON THE LAST COAL BOARD OFFER ITSELF.

4. HEATH ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT IT WOULD BE FOR THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 LONDON 01320 01 OF 02 291953Z

POLICE TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER DURING THE STRIKE (E.G., TO AVOID VIOLENT PICKETING OF THE POWER STATIONS, AS OCCURRED DURING THE LAST COAL STRIKE). HE INDICATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS ALSO CONSIDERING THE REDUCTION OF SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS TO STRIKERS' FAMILIES "ALTHOUGH NO ONE WANTED WOMEN AND CHILDREN TO SUFFER."

5. THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO LEFT THE DOOR SLIGHTLY AJAR TO A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WHICH MIGHT FLOW FROM

UTILIZATION OF THE PAY BOARD RELATIVITIES REPORT JUST ISSUED, BUT HIS STATEMENT WAS SOMEWHAT AMBIGUOUS AND SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVED THAT THE PAY BOARD REPORT MAY NOT BE REALLY PERTINENT TO THE CURRENT DISPUTE.

6. A SHADOW CABINET MOTION, HOWEVER, WAS TABLED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS TODAY, WITH HAROLD WILSON A PRINCIPAL SIGNATORY, WHICH REPUDIATES MCGAHEY'S STATEMENT "TO INVOKE THE STRIKE WEAPON AS A MEANS

ANNENBERG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 LONDON 01320 02 OF 02 292000Z

67

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 INT-08 SAJ-01

OMB-01 FEA-02 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /148 W

----- 124171

P R 291910Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7523

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 01320

OF CHANGING AN ELECTED GOVERNMENT OTHER THAN THROUGH A DEMOCRATIC ELECTION." HOWEVER THE STATEMENT CALLED ON THE PRIME MINISTER TO TAKE URGENT ACTION TOWARD AN "HONORABLE SETTLEMENT, AND SPEED THE PROCESS OF GETTING BRITAIN BACK TO WORK." (JOE GORMLEY, NUM PRESIDENT, ALSO REPORTEDLY CRITICIZED MCGAHEY BY DECLARING, "I ALONE SPEAK FOR THE UNION AS ITS OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN.")

7. NUM LEADERS IN SCOTLAND ARE MEETING TODAY WITH
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LONDON 01320 02 OF 02 292000Z

LOCAL ROAD TRANSPORT AND RAIL UNIONS' REPRESENTATIVES TO SEEK THEIR COOPERATION IN HALTING COAL SHIPMENTS IN CASE OF A STRIKE BY THE MINERS. MCGAHEY IS ALSO SEEKING POTENTIAL SUPPORT FROM UNIONS IN THE ELECTRIC POWER AND ENGINEERING FIELDS AS WELL AS FROM THE MINING SAFETY SPECIALISTS WHO BELONG TO ANOTHER UNION. TUC GENERAL SECRETARY LEN MURRAY REPORTEDLY DECLARED THAT "IF OUR MATES ARE IN TROUBLE IN THE MINING INDUSTRY NO ONE SHOULD THINK THAT THE TUC WILL STAND BY WITH ITS ARMS FOLDED."

8. COMMENT: THESE STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS REFLECT THE PRE-CONFRONTATION SKIRMISHING, AS REPORTS FROM THE PITHEADS SEEM TO BEAR OUT THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE MINERS WILL GIVE STRIKE AUTHORIZATION TO THE NUM EXECUTIVE. THE GOVERNMENT APPEARS DETERMINED TO AVOID THE SITUATION WHICH PREVAILED DURING THE LAST MINERS' STRIKE WHEN PICKETS PREVENTED COAL FROM BEING TRANSPORTED FROM THE PITHEADS TO THE STATIONS. MORE-OVER, THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT WILL PROVIDE ADDITIONAL POWER TO PREVENT AND TO PUNISH VIOLENT PICKETING. THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS TO MINERS' WIVES ALSO IS ANOTHER WEAPON WHICH THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT POSSIBLY USE. (THIS, HOWEVER, WOULD HAVE TO BE APPROVED BY PARLIAMENT.)

9. RESULTS OF THE PITHEAD BALLOT ARE EXPECTED TO BE ANNOUNCED ON FEBRUARY 4TH OR 5TH AND THE NUM HAS WRITTEN TO THE COAL BOARD THAT IF THE VOTE IS AFFIRMATIVE, IT INTENDS TO BEGIN ITS STRIKE ON FEBRUARY 10.

10. MCGAHEY'S STATEMENT, ALTHOUGH QUICKLY REPUDIATED BY THE LABOR PARTY LEADERSHIP AND BY THE MODERATE NUM PRESIDENT, JOE GORMLEY, HAS ADDED SUPPORT TO THE THESIS OF SEVERAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS THAT THE STRIKE IS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED. THIS THEME WILL BE PRESSED HARD DURING THE DAYS AHEAD AND WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT GOVERNMENT AMMUNITION IN ANY

ELECTION CAMPAIGN WHICH MAY TAKE PLACE.

ANNENBERG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 LONDON 01320 02 OF 02 292000Z

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, PRESS CONFERENCES, LABOR UNIONS, LABOR STRIKES, ECONOMIC PROGRAMS, COAL MINING, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS, COMMUNISTS, NATIONAL ELECTIONS, CIVIL DISORDERS, POLICE FORCES, SOCIAL INSURANCE, RAILROADS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LONDON01320
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974019/aaaaahyd.tel
Line Count: 231
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: LONDON 1116
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jul-2001 by maustmc>; APPROVED <30 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TENSIONS RISE AS MINE STRIKE IS ANTICIPATED
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, UK, NUM, NATIONAL UNION OF MINeworkERS, (HEATH, EDWARD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005